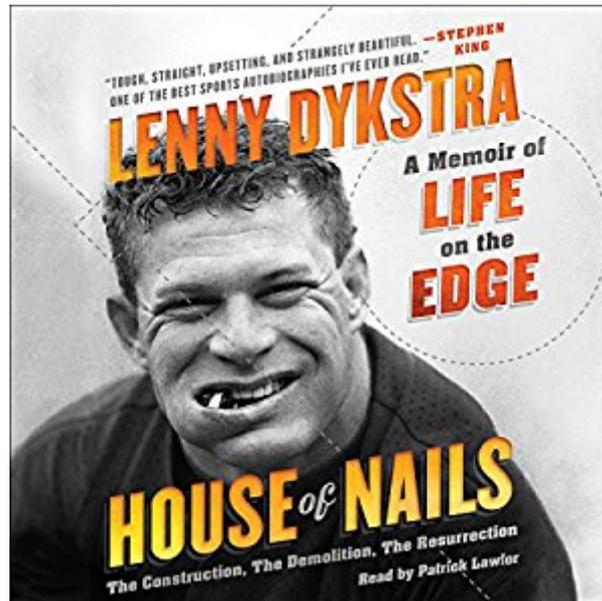


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# House Of Nails: A Memoir Of Life On The Edge



## Synopsis

"Tough, straight, upsetting, and strangely beautiful. One of the best sports autobiographies I've ever read. It comes from the heart." (Stephen King) Eclipsing the traditional sports memoir, *House of Nails*, by former world champion, multimillionaire entrepreneur, and imprisoned felon Lenny Dykstra, spins a tragicomic tale of Shakespearean proportions - a relentlessly entertaining American epic that careens between the heights and the abyss. Nicknamed "Nails" for his hustle and grit, Lenny approached the game of baseball - and life - with mythic intensity. During his decade in the majors as a center fielder for the legendary 1980s Mets and the 1990s Phillies, he was named to three All-Star teams and played in two of the most memorable World Series of the modern era. An overachiever known for his clutch hits, high on-base percentage, and aggressive defense, Lenny was later identified by his former minor league roommate, Billy Beane, as the prototypical "Moneyball" player in Michael Lewis' best seller. Tobacco stained, steroid powered, and booze and drug fueled, Nails also defined a notorious era of excess in baseball. Then came a second act no novelist could plausibly conjure: After retiring, Dykstra became a celebrated business mogul and investment guru. Touted as "one of the great ones" by CNBC's Jim Cramer, he became "baseball's most improbable postcareer success story" (*The New Yorker*), purchasing a \$17.5-million mansion and traveling the world by private jet. But when the economy imploded in 2008, Lenny lost everything. Then the feds moved in: Convicted of bankruptcy fraud (unjustly, he contends), Lenny served two and a half harrowing years in prison, where he was the victim of a savage beating by prison guards that knocked out his front teeth. *The Daily Show's* Jon Stewart, channeling the bewildered fascination of many observers, declared that Lenny's outrageous rise and spectacular fall was "the greatest story that I have ever seen in my lifetime". Now, for the first time, Lenny tells all about his tumultuous career, from battling through crippling pain to steroid use and drug addiction to a life of indulgence and excess, then an epic plunge and the long road back to redemption. Was Lenny's hard-charging, risk-it-all nature responsible for his success in baseball and business and his precipitous fall from grace? What lessons, if any, has he learned now that he has had time to think and reflect? Hilarious, unflinchingly honest, and irresistibly listenable, *House of Nails* makes no apologies and leaves nothing left unsaid.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Lenny Dykstra was a professional Major League Baseball (MLB) player for over a decade with both the National League's New York Mets (1985-89) and the Philadelphia Phillies (1989-96). He knows a lot of inside stuff about MLB and some of it is not pretty. Dykstra, now 53-years of age, has had a lot of ups and downs in both the sports and business world, including a stint as a jailbird in a state prison. At times, when he was hanging out with whacky Charley Sheen, he comes off as yet another egomaniac. Dykstra, somehow, landed on his feet just in time to pen a very entertaining book. It's called: "House of Nails: A Memoirs of Life on the Edge." A ballsy, Napoleon-complex was Dykstra's calling card. You know that little guy with the big mouth down at the end of the bar, who's forever looking to agitate a fight, preferably between two of the bigger dudes. Well, that's Dykstra. I'm sure you know at least one windbag type, like him. Dykstra's real moniker is Lenny Kyle Leswick. He hails from Garden Grove, CA, about an hour south of Los Angeles. On his father's side, he's of French-Canadian stock. Early on his dad abandoned the family. His mother remarried when he was four and her new husband, Dennis Dykstra, adopted him. When his biological father later tried to contact him after he became a baseball star, Dykstra told him to get lost. Can't blame him for that one. Honestly, parts of Dykstra's story turned me off. He comes on as a first class jerk. Despite his many failings, however, it was hard to put the Dykstra's book down. It's a fast-paced read with plenty of zany yarns. Dykstra understands baseball for sure and what it takes to be a winner. There are also a lot of valuable life lessons in his memoirs.

I give Dykstra a little credit. He wrote the book himself - fired his ghost writer and did it all by himself. Perhaps a ghost writer might have given it a little bit of an adult feel but writing a book is an accomplishment. One problem is Dykstra's ego and maturity level. Ever go to an NFL game and you

have that guy sitting behind you who constantly yells obscenities, couldn't give a flying yahoo about your kids or anyone else around him, is all about himself and is a jerk and ready to fight anyone who points this out? That guy wrote this book. This is a guy who is in his 50s yet he constantly uses the word "hater," the favorite word of the 12 year old girl. He writes, upon seeing his future wife for the first time "I really just wanted to take her in the safe and f her." Yeah, what a nice thing for your kids to read. That kind of mentality is through out the book. It's like a 19 year old kid wrote this, not a guy who you'd think would have gained some maturity after over half a century of living. He talks about how he first got into steroids, didn't know anything about it, went to the library and researched it because he was having issues playing a full season, then later says "everyone was doing it, you had to compete." So which is it? If everyone was doing it and he knew it, surely he could have just went to one of his teammates, right? Or is he just making excuses? (he's making excuses like all juicers do). He talks about his legal issues. They're all someone else's fault. Nothing is his fault. He's a great guy who does nothing wrong and was just a victim of circumstance. Of course the authorities never researched any of the evidence, just tossed him in jail.

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